

## Kent biotech business set to make £1m thanks to Japan exports

This news comes as the International Trade Secretary Liz Truss returned from a visit to Tokyo last month where she launched her 'call for input' to underline the government's commitment to reaching a free trade agreement with Japan as soon as possible.

AbBaltis is based in Sittingbourne and specialises in creating diagnostic samples specific to market regulations, something that is in demand in Japan where a lot of biotechnology companies work internationally.

The company already supplies blood plasma to disease-testing businesses across Europe, North America and Asia.

### **Giedre Brandao, Managing Director at AbBaltis said:**

One of the biggest challenges for a business that's new to exporting or to a market is getting a foot in the door and making that first point of contact.

Now that we're establishing our presence in Japan, customers are reaching out to us organically. If we can do it, other businesses can too.

The company was introduced to its new Japanese customers at MEDICA 2017 in Dusseldorf – the largest trade show in the world for the medical sector, attracting more than 5,000 exhibitors from 70 countries.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) helped the business to exhibit at MEDICA 2017 through its Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) – which provides grant funding for businesses to gain market knowledge and make new contacts through exhibiting at trade shows overseas.

With assistance and specialist advice from its DIT International Trade Adviser (ITA), the business forged valuable connections with medical businesses in Asia which led to the company securing new customers in Japan.

### **Ben Raby, Head of the South East at DIT, said:**

AbBaltis wanted to increase its international sales to new regions like East Asia and exhibiting at tradeshows is a great way to get your business and its products in front of potential customers.

Being face-to-face with these customers can lead to future sales, and ongoing business relationships. As demonstrated by AbBaltis, this can have a positive impact on turnover.

We'd encourage any business considering exporting to get in touch. We have International Trade Advisers on hand throughout the region to guide producers at every stage of their export journey, and staff on the ground in over 100 countries to eliminate trade hurdles linked to legislation, tax, labelling requirements, and other factors.

In recognition of its export achievements, AbBaltis was selected to be an Export Champion by DIT, joining the nationwide Export Champion Community of companies acting as ambassadors for overseas trade, offering practical advice and tips to other businesses.

The business has increased its annual turnover from £460,000 to £802,000 in the financial year 2017/18 and forecasts its turnover will reach £1million next year. This increase is largely thanks to international sales, with exports to Asia increasing from 3.5% of annual turnover in 2017, to 16% in 2018.

Businesses looking for support should call 0330 300 0012 or email [info@tradesoutheast.com](mailto:info@tradesoutheast.com). They can also visit [great.gov.uk](http://great.gov.uk) which has information on live export opportunities and includes general information on exporting and events.